

Message Text

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SUBJ: WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE, PRELIMINARY MEETING

PASS TO:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY, UNITED STATES SENATE.

MOST OF THE NATIONAL DELEGATIONS WHICH ARE MEMBERS OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE MET DURING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 16-20 TO DISCUSS SEVERAL SPECIFIC PROPOSALS WHICH HAD BEEN OFFERED. THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS EMERGED FROM THIS MEETING.

1. AN INTEGRATED APPROACH INCORPORATING ALL THE VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS WHICH CAN HAVE A BEARING ON WORLD AGRICULTURE SHOULD BE PURSUED IN FOLLOWING THE WORLD FOOD PROBLEM.

2. A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT ON PROPOSALS FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACTION INCLUDING THE "WORLD FOOD AUTHORITY" SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSURING THAT ALL ELEMENTS ARE INCLUDED.

3. EFFECTIVE FOLLOW-UP ACTION IS REQUIRED IF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE ARE TO BE IMPLEMENTED.

4. THERE IS A NEED TO REVIEW THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVING AND MODIFYING EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL MACHINERY WHICH IS AVAILABLE TO DEAL WITH WORLD FOOD PROBLEMS. THE PROPER
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INSTITUTIONAL MACHINERY WAS AN ISSUE OF SOME CONTROVERSY.

IT WAS GENERALLY FELT THAT EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT OPERATING AS ADEQUATELY OR EFFICIENTLY AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, MOST COUNTRIES INDICATED THAT NEW INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE AVOIDED WHERE POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHERE NEEDED TO TAP NEW RESOURCES (SPECIAL FUNDS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, FOOD STOCKS OR FERTILIZER RESERVES).

5. THERE WAS WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR THE NEED TO TAP NEW RESOURCES FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTICULARLY IN THE FORM OF NEW AID COMMITMENTS FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES. THE CREATION OF SPECIAL FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE, HOWEVER, WAS RESISTED BY MOST OF THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHICH FELT THAT EXISTING MACHINERY SHOULD BE UTILIZED.

6. THERE WERE PROPOSALS FOR A GRAIN RESERVE SCHEME SIMILAR TO SECRETARY-GENERAL BOERMA'S (OF FAO) PROPOSAL FLOATED AMONG VARIOUS DELEGATIONS, BUT MOST COUNTRIES WITHHELD JUDGMENT AT THIS POINT. SUCH A RESERVE WOULD BE NATIONALLY CONTROLLED BUT COORDINATED THROUGH AN INTERNATIONAL BODY WHICH WOULD SET GUIDELINES FOR BUILD-UP AND RELEASE OF STOCKS AND PROVIDE A FORUM FOR CONSULTATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION. THE TOTAL LEVEL OF SUCH STOCKS, THE EXTENT AND NATURE OF U.S. PARTICIPATION AND POSSIBLE SANCTIONS AGAINST NON-PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES WHICH IT IS FELT SHOULD BE MEMBERS, OR WHICH ARE MEMBERS BUT FAIL TO FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES OF THE COORDINATING BODY, WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT.

IN PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFICIALS FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IT WAS INDICATED THAT THE EEC WOULD GO ALONG WITH AN EMERGENCY RELIEF AND SUPPLY STABILIZATION RESERVE BUT THEY CLEARLY WANT TO EXCHANGE THEIR PARTICIPATION FOR CONCESSIONS WITHIN THE UPCOMING MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS. THE RUSSIANS HAVE HELD BACK ON ANY POSITIVE COMMITMENT TO A STOCKPILING SCHEME PENDING CONSULTATION WITH MOSCOW WHICH THEY SAID THEY WOULD DO IMMEDIATELY, BUT HAVE SHOWN SINCERE CONCERN OVER THE VERY LOW LEVEL OF PRESENT WORLD GRAIN INVENTORIES. THE SOVIETS ARE PARTICULARLY RELUCTANT TO SHARE INFORMATION ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND STOCK LEVELS SAYING THAT THE RELEASE OF SUCH INFORMATION WOULD JEOPARDIZE

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WHAT THEY CONSIDER NORMAL COMMERCIAL PRIVACY PRIVILEGES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADING. JAPAN ALSO IS WITHHOLDING JUDGMENT ON A STOCKPILING SCHEME UNTIL MORE INFORMATION ON THE SPECIFICS OF SUCH A SCHEME IS AVAILABLE.

MESSAGE PREPARED FOR THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY BY TOM SAYLOR, PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER.BEAUDRY

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED UNITED STATES SENATE.

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